k:Jochelson F-5 (1900-01)1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

517 covered with more or less realistic designs, while the decoration of ordinary
171 garments represents geometrical motives. I have stated that the same phenomenon occurs among the Yakut and Tungus in reference to the decoration of their shaman's and ordinary wearing-apparel. We see the reverse among the Koryak. Their funeral and dancing garments are covered with geometrical designs, and realistic designs are found only among the decorative motives of ordinary coats and on fur rugs.

532 In the ornamentation of funeral garments there is only one case of a figure resembling a starfish,[1] and another resembling a frog. An ancient
● 425 Chukchee quiver has embroidered figures resembling the Russian letter Ж,[2] which could be mistaken for a conventionalized frog. I point this out, because, in the Gilyak cult, the frog plays an important part, and its figure serves as an amulet.[3] In Yukaghir mythology the frog is mentioned,[4] but neither in the Koryak nor in the Chukchee myths do we meet with the frog.[5]

531 This may be the proper place to say a few words as to the part played by figures in the decorative art of the Koryak in general. If we are to assume that, in the case of all tribes, every ornament has, or had at one time, a certain meaning, then I must confess that I have not succeeded in finding the required explanations, either because the Koryak have forgotten the meaning of their ancient ornaments, or because the particular persons from whom I tried to obtain the explanations were not familiar with them, in which case the subject still remains to be investigated.

I was able to ascertain that all ornamental designs on dresses, as well as the tattooings, are called by the same name — ka'li or ke'le — as is used by the Koryak to designate, not only all kinds of drawings, but also the printing in books and Russian letters. Some Koryak said that simple, double, and concentric circles represent the sun, the moon, or the stars. I
[124] was told on one occasion that zigzags represent mountains; on another, that they represent waves. Cross-like figures are supposed to represent flying birds; but I was told that as a general rule the ornament had no special significance. Even the information as to zigzags I obtained only after insistent questioning, which may have stimulated the answer. The impression obtained by me was, that the persons interrogated were considering their replies while being questioned. For that reason, I do not attach special importance to their answers. It will be clearly apparent from what follows, that the women

[1] See woman's funeral overcoat, Part I, Fig. 32, p. 108.
[2] See Bogoras, Chukchee Material Life, Plate XI, Fig. 2.
[3] See Schrenck, III, p. 750.
[4] See Jochelson, Yukaghir Materials, p. 5.
[5] Mr. Sternberg has called my attention to the resemblance of some figures in the Koryak-Chukchee decorative art to Gilyak representations of the frog; but I have never seen a frog in the country of the Koryak. Neither Krasheninnikoff (I, p. 490) nor Dittmar (Reisen in Kamtschatka, p. 343) found it in Kamchatka. If the ornament in question really represents a frog, this pattern must have been adopted from the south. I should add, however, that, according to Slunin's assertions (see Slunin, I, p. 339), one species of frog has been found in Kamchatka.